



South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs
South Dakota Department of the Military



APPROPRIATORS TOUR STATE VETERANS HOME

This week members of the Appropriations Committee and staff from the Legislative Research Council toured state facilities in western South Dakota.

One of the facilities they toured was the Michael J. Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home. SDDVA Secretary Zimmerman welcomed the group to the Home and provided a little history on the construction and funding of the Home.

Staff provided the group with a tour of the Home, the biomass plant, as well as some of the historical buildings on campus. Legislators got to visit some of the households, as well as see first-hand all of the features that Town Square provides.

Legislators that participated in the tour were Senators Larry Tidemann, and John Wiik and Representatives Jean Hunhoff, Hugh Bartels, Taffy Howard, Chris Karr, John Lake and Dan Ahlers.



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KOREAN WAR HERO LAID TO REST THIS WEEK

The remains of Korean War Soldier, Army Sergeant Philip Lyotte were laid to rest in his hometown of White River this week. Family, friends, veterans and the White River community gathered to share in a ceremony filled with Lakota traditions.

Lyotte had been captured and died in a Chinese prison camp. His body was returned to the United States after the war but remained unidentified until recent DNA tests. Sergeant Lyotte's family is grateful to have this closure nearly 65 years after the war's end.

In his remarks, Secretary Zimmerman stated, "South Dakota's 70,000 veterans welcomed their brother home today. The Lakota, Dakota, and Nakota people have their warrior home."



"Our nation is thankful for his ultimate sacrifice fighting for our freedoms," said Zimmerman.



SDNG PROVIDES DOMESTIC OPERATIONS SUPPORT

The South Dakota National Guard continued to provide domestic operations support to the citizens of South Dakota and the nation throughout 2017. Soldiers and airmen responded to a variety of missions at the state and federal level that supported civil authorities, emergency management personnel and law enforcement agencies.

Located in 22 communities across the state, the SDNG has more than 4,100 service members that can provide overwhelming capability and capacity to the governor before and after disasters strike. In 2017, Guard members were called up by Gov. Dennis Daugaard to support 11 state active duty missions that involved 90 personnel and totaled over 300 man-days.

The majority of the response involved wildland fire support providing aerial water suppression assistance using HH-60 Black Hawk helicopter crews and ground support personnel. The Army Guard responded to eight fires throughout the Black Hills and western South Dakota from March through September.

When not dropping water, flight crews are also picking up people in need. One crew assisted in the rescue of a male hiker who was injured on Black Elk Peak and airlifted from Custer State Park on April 13. The man was found near high rock formations by Custer County Search and Rescue personnel about two-thirds of the way up the 7,200-foot peak in rough terrain. The man was airlifted to Rapid City Regional Hospital for treatment.

Another team training and ready to support a variety of local and state agencies in 2017 was the 82nd Civil Support Team. Deployable within 90 minutes, the 22-member unit conducted numerous exercises this past year to maintain their preparedness level for responding to chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear threats. The unit uses high-tech equipment for substance detection and has an array of testing, laboratory and communications gear to help identify natural or man-made hazardous materials. As the state's all-hazards response team, the 82nd serves as subject matter experts on any CBRN event and supports civil authorities in major disasters and help emergency management personnel get a clear picture of what's happening and how to address it.

While the CST was training to protect against CBRN dangers, a new team was activated this year to respond to cyber threats. In June, an activation ceremony was held for the newest SDNG unit; Detachment 2, Cyber Protection Team 174. CPTs are part of the National Guard Bureau's ongoing growth of cyber forces throughout the Department of Defense. The team can be called up by the president or governor to assist local, state and federal agencies' in protecting domestic critical infrastructure and to provide support to law enforcement, homeland defense and defense support of civil authority activities in support of national objectives.

However, it's not just within the state that South Dakota Guardsmen responded this year. When disaster struck the island of Puerto Rico in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria, the state responded. Gov. Daugaard activated four members of Company A, 139th Brigade Support Battalion, at the request of Puerto Rico government authorities to help with recovery operations and provide water distribution capabilities to those in need. On Oct. 8, the soldiers deployed with two Load Handling System vehicles and trailers equipped with four compatible water tank racks, or "Hippos." The Hippo has the capability to receive, store and distribute up to 2,000 gallons of potable water per system.



VA BLACK HILLS HEALTH CARE SYSTEM TO HONOR VIETNAM VETERANS NOVEMBER 1

The United States Department of Veterans Affairs Black Hills Health Care System (VABHHCS) will honor the service, sacrifice, and enduring achievements of Vietnam Veterans during a Vietnam War Commemoration 50th Anniversary event. The event will take place on Wednesday, November 1st at 12:00 p.m. (MT) at TREA (1981 Centre St.) in Rapid City.

The ceremony will commemorate Vietnam War Veterans and each Vietnam Veteran will receive a Vietnam Veteran lapel pin during a pinning ceremony as part of the event. The lapel pins will be presented in a dignified manner to each Vietnam Veteran during the event, and include accompanying remarks to reflect the nation's thanks for their service and sacrifice.

TREA will be serving an all you can eat chili buffet starting at 11:00 a.m. for a cost of \$7.

HAPPENINGS AT THE STATE VETERANS HOME

Fall is in the air — and signs of that are evident at the Michael J. Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home. Residents have been busy baking pies, making chili, dressing in costumes, taking hayrides and enjoying time by the fire pit.

Thanks to the staff at the Home, the residents are

kept busy both on and off the campus.



HIGHWAY PATROL SERVE UP SUPPER FOR THE RESIDENTS AT THE VETERANS HOME

The West River squad of the South Dakota Highway Patrol took time out of their busy schedule to visit our veterans at the Michael J. Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home last week. Not only did they visit the residents, but they cooked and served supper to the residents. "Gracias." "Danke."



WHAT'S
COOKING



Upcoming Events

Nov 2—SFVAHCS Open House to Honor Veterans—SFVAHCS—4:00 pm—6:00 pm (CT)
Nov 4—Public Agent Orange Forum—Meade County Court House in Sturgis (2nd Floor Commissioners Chambers—1300 Sherman Street) 9:00 am and 1:00 pm (MT)
Nov 5—Salute to Veterans—Washington Pavilion—301 S. Main Avenue—Sioux Falls—3:00 pm (CT)
Nov 8—SD Veterans Council Meeting—PVA Headquarters in Sioux Falls—10:00 am (CT)
Nov 9-13—VFW Disabled Veterans Hunt—Gettysburg
Nov 10—State Offices Closed
Nov 11—SFVAHCS Service of Remembrance—SFVAHCS—1:30 pm (CT)
Nov 11—SDSU Military Appreciation Day—Kickoff at 2:00 pm (CT)
Nov 11—American Heroes Outdoors Veterans Day Banquet—Aberdeen Elks Lodge 1046—5:00 pm (CST)
Nov 11-12—Sea of Goodwill Equine Experience Retreat—Joy Ranch—Watertown
Nov 23-24—State Offices Closed
Dec 2-3—Yellow Ribbon for the 153rd EN—Mitchell
Dec 5—Governor's Budget Address—1:00 pm (CT)
Dec 12—SDDVA Mini Conference via Skype—10:00 am (CT)
December 25-26—State Offices Closed

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Jan 9—Governor's State of the State Address—1:00 pm (CT)
Jan 10—SD Veterans Commission Meeting—RedRossa in Pierre—9:00 am (CT)
Jan 10—SDDVA/Veterans Council Legislative Reception—RedRossa in Pierre—5:00—8:00 pm (CT)
Jan 18—SD American Legion Legislative Reception—Post 8—Pierre—5:00 pm (CT)
Jan 28-29—VFW Legislative Conference—Ft. Pierre AmericInn
Jan 29—VFW Legislative Reception—AmericInn—Ft. Pierre—6:00 pm—7:30 pm (CT)
Feb 16-18 American Legion Mid Winter Conference—Oacoma
Jun 7-10—American Legion State Convention—Spearfish
Jun 14-17—VFW State Convention—Sioux Falls

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